1.   A method for updating a configuration of a device, comprising:

obtaining an indication of an intended action to be performed by the device;

preparing a configuration list of program components required to perform the

intended action based on the intended action and configuration information for the device;

determining for each program component in the configuration list whether the

program component is installed on the device; and

transferring each required program component that is not installed on the device to

the device and installing the program component on the device.

2.   The method of claim 1, wherein preparing a configuration list comprises querying

one or more databases based on the intended action and configuration information for the

device.

3.   The method of claim 1, wherein the intended action is to be performed on one or

more media files, each media file having an associated file type.

4.   The method of claim 3, wherein the device is a media playback device.

5.   The method of claim 3, wherein the action includes one or more of:

playing at least one of the one or more media files, transferring at least one of the one

or more media files to another device, transferring at least one of the one or more media files

to a tangible medium, transferring at least one of the one or more media files to a network-

based store, or configuring the device.

6.   The method of claim 1, further comprising:

transferring the configuration list to the device;

wherein determining whether the program component is installed on the device is

performed by a configuration manager located in the device.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein transferring each required program component comprises:

using a configuration manager located in the device to request each required program component from one or more remote servers and to transfer each requested program component to the device.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein at least two remote servers are hosted by different providers.

9. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

repeating the determining and transferring steps after each installation of a program component on the device.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein the configuration list comprises one or more software components.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein the configuration list comprises one or more firmware components.

12. The method of claim 1, wherein the configuration list comprises one or more minimum hardware component versions.

13. The method of claim 1, wherein the device is a pass-through device.

14. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

transferring a list of program components that are installed on the device to a remote system; and

determining on the remote system whether each program component in the configuration list is installed on the device.

15.   A configuration manager for updating a configuration of a device, comprising:

means for obtaining an indication of an intended action to be performed by the device;

means for determining whether the intended action can be performed by the device; and

means for updating the configuration of the device so that the intended action can be performed.

16.   The configuration manager of claim 15, wherein the means for determining comprises:

means for receiving a configuration list of program components required to perform the intended action; and

means for determining for each program component in the configuration list whether the program component is installed on the device.

17.   The configuration manager of claim 15, wherein the means for updating comprises:

means for transferring each required program component that is not installed on the device to the device; and

means for installing the program component on the device.

18.   The configuration manager of claim 17, wherein the means for transferring comprises:

means for requesting each required program component from one or more remote servers; and

means for transferring each requested program component to the device.

19.   The configuration manager of claim 15, wherein the configuration list comprises one or more software components.

20.   The configuration manager of claim 15, wherein the configuration list comprises one or more firmware components.

21.   The configuration manager of claim 20, wherein the configuration list comprises one or more hardware component versions.

22.   The configuration manager of claim 16, wherein the device is a pass-through device.

23.   The configuration manager of claim 16, further comprising means for scheduling a configuration update.

24.   The configuration manager of claim 16, wherein the intended action is to be performed on one or more media files, each media file having an associated file type.

25.   The configuration manager of claim 24, wherein the device is a media playback device.

26.   The configuration manager of claim 24, wherein the action includes one or more of:
        playing at least one of the one or more media files, transferring at least one of the one or more media files to another device, or transferring at least one of the one or more media files to a tangible medium.

27.   An application server for updating a configuration of a device, comprising:
        means for obtaining an indication of an intended action to be performed by the device;
        means for preparing a configuration list of program components required to perform the intended action, based on the intended action and configuration information for the device; and
        means for transferring the configuration list to the device.

28.   The application server of claim 27, further comprising means for transferring one or more required program components to the device.

29.   The application server of claim 27, further comprising means for storing the configuration list.

30.   The application server of claim 27, wherein the action is to be performed on one or more media files, each media file having an associated file type.

31.   The application server of claim 30, further comprising means for obtaining information about the file type.

32.   The application server of claim 30, wherein the file type includes one or more of codec type, codec version, digital rights management type, digital rights management version, encoded bit rate and rights associated with the media file.

33.   The application server of claim 30, wherein the means for preparing comprises:
        means for querying one or more databases based on information about an intended action to be performed on at least one media file by the device, information about the file type for the media file, and information about the device; and
        means for assembling result from database queries into a configuration list.

34.   The application server of claim 27, further comprising means for obtaining information about the device.

35.   The application server of claim 27, wherein the device is a pass-through device.

36.   The application server of claim 27, wherein the device is a media playback device.

37.   The application server of claim 27, wherein the configuration list includes one or more of the following:

program component name, program component version, registry check key, registry check value, file check location, file check version, file download size, file download URL, and file execution parameters.

5   38.   A method for using a media device to perform an intended action on one or more media files, comprising:

obtaining an indication of an intended action to be performed by the device;

preparing a configuration list of program components required to perform the intended action based on the intended action and configuration information for the device;

10   determining for each program component in the configuration list whether the program component is installed on the device;

transferring each required program component that is not installed on the device to the device and installing the program component on the device; and

performing the intended action on at least one of the one or more media files using

15   the installed program components.

39.   The method of claim 38, wherein the steps of preparing, determining and transferring are performed without requiring any user interaction with the media device.

20   40.   The method of claim 38, further comprising transferring at least one of the one or more media files to the device.